

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 IZMIR 00132 01 OF 02 062246Z
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CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 1 OF 2 IZMIR 132

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TAGS: PINT, TU
SUBJECT: IZMIR JUSTICE PARTY LEADERSHIP CHALLENGING

PARTY TO SEEK BROADENED BASE

REF: IZMIR 058

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. CONFLICT WITHIN THE IZMIR PROVINCIAL JUSTICE PARTY (JP) ORGANIZATION IS BEING GIVEN PROMINENT ATTENTION IN THE LOCAL PRESS. THE CONTROVERSY CENTERS UPON A RECENT "SECRET" SEMINAR FOR LOCAL LEADERS OSTENSIBLY DESIGNED TO DISCUSS NEW APPROACHES FOR THE JP ON LIGHT OF THE PARTY'S OPPOSITION STATUS AND FALLING VOTER APPEAL. AT THIS MEETING SOME SPEAKERS CALLED FOR A REVITALIZATION

PAGE 2RUFLAEA4664 CONFIDENTIAL
OF THE PARTY AND RETURN TO THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC VALUES FOUND IN THE PARTIES CONSTITUTION. DISSIDENTS UNHAPPY WITH THE PRESENT PROVINCIAL LEADERSHIP, AS WELL AS JP MEMBERS WHO RESENT THE "LEFTIST" LABEL GIVEN TO THE JP BY SOME SEMINAR SPEAKERS AND THOSE WHO VIEW THE SEMINAR AS ANTI-DEMIREL, HAVE ATTACKED THE SEMINAR, AND THE

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 IZMIR 00132 01 OF 02 062246Z

PRESENT PROVINCIAL LEADERSHIP. THREE MEMBERS OF THE IZMIR JP ADMINSTRATIVE BOARD HAVE RESIGNED. THUS FAR, THE JP CENTRAL LEADERSHIP SEEMS TO BE KEEPING ITS DISTANCE, ALTHOUGH THE SEMINAR APPEARS TO BE THE FIRST STEP IN CHALLENGING THE PRESENT JP CENTRAL HEADQUARTERS' LEADERSHIP. THE ULTIMATE TARGET MAY BE DEMIREL. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING THE MARCH 25-26 WEEKEND, THE IZMIR PROVINCIAL

JP ORGANIZATION HELD AT SIFNE A SEMINAR ENTITLED, "NEW APPROACHES IN PARTY WORK". IN ADDITION TO PROVINCIAL AND COUNTY LEADERS, SEVERAL NATIONAL PARTY FIGURES, INCLUDING SECRETARY GENERAL NAHIT MENTESE AND DEPUTY PRESIDENT GENERAL SADETTIN BILGIC, ATTENDED. HAYRETTIN YORGANCIOLU, THE IZMIR PROVINCIAL JP PRESIDENT, WHO INITIATED THE MEETING, EXPLAINED BEFORE THE MEETING THAT

PAGE 3 RUFLAEA4664 C O N F I D E N T I A L
ITS OBJECTIVES WERE TO PROVIDE GUIDANCE TO THE RANK AND FILE, TO PROVIDE A BASIS FOR CONSTRUCTIVE OPPOSITION TO THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT, AND TO CONVINCE THE PEOPLE THAT THE JP IS THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE TO THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT. HIS ASSURANCES THAT THE SEMINAR WAS NOT A CHALLENGE TO THE PRESENT JP LEADERSHIP WERE SOMEWHAT LESS CONVINCING SINCE THE MEETING WAS "SECRET" (CLOSED TO ALL BUT JP LEADERS) AND HE CITED THE NEED TO RAPIDLY ELIMINATE PAST MISTAKES TO PREVENT THE SINKING OF THE JP.

3. SINCE THE SIFNE MEETING WAS BEHIND CLOSED DOORS, REPORTS OF WHAT WAULSAID WERE FRAGMENTARY AND LARGEMLY UNCONFIRMED. SEVERAL THEMES, HOWEVER, SEEMED TO PREDOMINATE. A NUMBER OF SPEAKERS, INCLUDING SINASI ERTAN (THE JP CANDIDATE FOR MAYOR OF IZMIR AND CHAIRMAN OF THE

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 IZMIR 00132 01 OF 02 062246Z

ASSEMBLY OF THE AEGEAN CHAMBER OF INDUSTRY) AND CENTRAL COUNTY (MERKEZ ILCE) PRESIDENT YAVUZ ONURSAL DEFENDED THE IDEA THAT ACCORDING TO ITS CONSTITUTION THE JP IS A SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY, NOT A RIGHTIST PARTY, AND THAT JP LEADERS SHOULD HAVE THE COURAGE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THIS. WITHOUT

PAGE 4 RUFLAEA4664 C O N F I D E N T I A L
CONTRADICTING THIS THEME, OTHER SPEAKERS, INCLUDING MENTESE, DISTINGUISHED THE JP FROM THE "NATIONALISM" OF THE NATIONAL ACTION PARTY (NAP) AND ARGUED THAT IN NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD THE JP AGAIN FORM A COALITION WITH THE NAP AND NATIONAL SALVATION PARTY (NSP). OTHER SPEAKERS CITING POSSIBLE EARLY GENERAL ELECTIONS AND THE 1979 PARTIAL SENATORIAL ELECTIONS, CALLED ON THE JP TO ESTABLISH NEW CITY (INCLUDING GECEKONDU) AND RURAL POLICIES AND TO MAKE A SPECIAL EFFORT TO ATTRACT YOUTH. IN ADDITION, CONCERN WAS EXPRESSED ABOUT THE JP'S FLAGGING APPEAL AMONG CIVIL SERVANTS, TRADESMEN, AND WORKERS.

4. WHILE THE LOCAL GENERALLY PRO-JP PRESS PLAYED UP THE THEME OF UNITY DURING THE MEETING, EVEN CITING THE UNITY

BETWEEN NAILI ERDIN (FORMER MINISTER OF LABOR AND EDUCATION) AND CEMAL TERCAN (PRESIDENT GENERAL OF THE IZMIR ARTISANS AND TRADESMEN'S ASSOCIATION) WHO HAD BEEN KNOWN AS LEADERS OF OPPOSING FACTIONS, THE FAÇADE OF TOGETHERNESS SOON BROKE DOWN. THREE MEMBERS OF THE IZMIR JP ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD RESIGNED, PROTESTING THE LABELLING OF THE PARTY AS "LEFTIST" AND COMPLAINING TO DEMIREL.

PAGE 5 RUFLAEA4664 C O N F I D E N T I A L
FORMER JP YOUTH BRANCH PRESIDENT KAPANCIOLU ACCUSED THE IZMIR JP YJP OF BEING ANTI-DEMIREL. TO COUNTER THESE ACCUSATIONS YORGANCIOLU AND THE 19 IZMIR COUNTY PRESIDENTS HELD CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 IZMIR 00132 01 OF 02 062246Z

A PRESS CONFERENCE ON APRIL 4 TO ASSERT THAT THE ONLY PURPOSE OF THE SIFNE MEETING WAS TO DISCUSS NEW IDEAS AND APPROACHES. NOTHING WAS SAID CONCERNING THEIR SECRETARY GENERAL WHO THEY CONTINUE TO SUPPORT. THE GROUP ALSO DECLARED THAT THOSE WHO SAID THE MEETING WAS ANTI-DEMIREL WERE DIVIDING THE PARTY.

5. IN A MEETING WITH CONGEN OFFICER FIVE DAYS AFTER THE SEMINAR, ERTAN (WHO IS PRINCIPALLY A SPOKESMAN FOR JP BUSINESSMEN) EXPLAINED THAT THERE HAS BEEN A FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE IN THE OUTLOOK OF THE TURKISH PEOPLE AND THEY ARE NOW CAPABLE OF MAKING SHARP JUDGEMENTS WITH RESPECT TO PARTY PROMISES AND PERFORMANCES. THE JP IS LOSING THE SYMPATHY OF THE INTELLECTUALS, WORKERS AND VILLAGERS, AND AS A RESULT HE CALLED UPON THE JP AT THE SEMINAR TO REGAIN ITS STRENGTH THROUGH A NEW APPEAL BASED ON THE MODERATE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC ROOTS OF THE PARTY. IT HAS BEEN THE NEGLECT OF THESE ROOTS WHICH HAS CONTRIBUTED TO THE LOSS OF CONFI-

PAGE 6 RUFLAEA4664 C O N F I D E N T I A L
DENCE IN THE JP AMONG THE PEOPLE. WHILE VILLAGERS CONTINUE TO REMAIN LOYAL TO THE JP, A NEW POLICY FOR THE CITIES IS NEEDED. ERTAN EXPLAINED THAT NO SPEAKERS ATTACKED DEMIREL SINCE FOR THE PRESENT THERE IS NO ALTERNATIVE. NEVERTHELESS, ACCORDING TO ERTAN, CHANGES IN THE

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 01 IZMIR 00132 02 OF 02 062245Z
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 IZMIR 132

JP GENERAL HEADQUARTERS MUST BE MADE, AND NEW BLOOD INTRODUCED. THE TEST FOR DEMIREL WILL THEN BE THE JP'S SHOWING IN THE 1979 PARTIAL SENATORIAL ELECTIONS. IF HE FAILS, "THERE IS NO POWER IN TURKEY WHICH CAN KEEP DEMIREL AS SECRETARY GENERAL". ON THE OTHER HAND, ERTAN ACKNOWLEDGED THAT YORGANCIOLU AND HIS SUPPORTERS MIGHT NOT SUCCEED IN HOLDING ONTO POWER IN THE IZMIR JP ORGANIZATION, AND THUS THE REFORM IMPULSE MIGHT BE LOST.

6. BEGIN COMMENT. THE SIFNE SEMINAR APPEARS TO BE A LOGICAL EXTENSION OF THE VIEWS YORGANCIOLU OUTLINED IN REFTEL. HIS VIEWS ARE MIRRORED BY MANY IN THE IZMIR JP WHO ARE DEEPLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE JP'S CONTINUALLY

PAGE 2 RUFLAEA4665 C O N F I D E N T I A L

ERODING BASE IN THE CITIES AND AMONG THE INTELLECTUALS. THESE PEOPLE IN CALLING FOR NEW BLOOD (PARTICULARLY AN APPEAL TO YOUTH AND WORKERS), BELIEVE THAT CHANGE CAN ONLY COME ABOUT ONCE CHANGES ARE MADE AT GENERAL HEADQUARTERS. THERE SEEMS A WILLINGNESS TO TRY TO WIN OVER DEMIREL TO THEIR PHILOSOPHY, BUT THEY WILL PREPARE A CHALLENGE TO HIS LEADERSHIP IF THE PARTY KEEPS SLIPPING. NATURALLY,

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 IZMIR 00132 02 OF 02 062245Z

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS, AS WELL AS DEMIREL, MAY REACT BY TRYING TO UNDERMINE THE PRESENT IZMIR JP LEADERSHIP. BEHIND THE IZMIR JP'S ATTEMPT TO FORCE A NEW APPROACH ON THE PARTY ARE MANY DYNAMIC AND INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE. IF THEIR EFFORTS FAIL, MANY TRADITIONAL JP SUPPORTERS MAY LOOK TO OTHER PARTIES. END COMMENT.

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